Dear Paul, 2/13/76

While there is another purpose in my writing now again I must say thanks. The Lanier is due locally tomorrow and the shop is 10 minutes away only.

A commentary on modern merchandizing is involved. I've been talking to the local dealer for 3-4 weeks, when I could. He had the machines ordered then. He got a shipment of everything but them day before yesterday and the regional director is only 60 miles away. However, I also got a mailing from Lanier. What list they bought I don't know. But it had a toll-free number in the Atlanta home office. I used it and they used it and the regional distributor called me with apologies. When both these characters talked earlier in the week that accomplished nothing. Now there is a special one-machine shipment bu United Parcel. They'd have sent it directly here, too! Only I asked that if go to the dealer because I'm going to get a box of cassettes (lifetime guarantee) and batteries that can be recharged and a patchcord that can feed a regular tape recorder. There is an output for zzz a listening devise that can be used with a gadget in the pacthcord.

I'll try it on a bus Wednesday, when I have to go to Washington for the special anti-embolism leotards - that's what they are and are called - that have been made. They came in today, Monday is a holiday, Tuesday I have some help scheduled so it will be Wednesday.

There is the ill-wind benfit now. Lane has turned off a number of concerned and solid Washington college people, both sexes. They were here last Saturday and got some books ready for shipment to a New York distributor. They then did other work for several hours. Seven are coming tomorrow to continue it. Maybe I'll get the basement under control yet, with them. I'd like to get the dead storage organized and they see the value. Some of the girls will work on culling the crammed office files for more dead storage (non-current) so I'll have room. I'm always getting new material.

The special purpose is the possibility -not certain - of a speech at Vegas. The circumstances are unusual. There is aguy I've never met who turned on after reading Whitewash II and recognized a character in it as an acquaintance. So, without asking me, he did and black-bag job on this character, with a friend. When I couldn't get there and LIFE seemed interested, I turned it over to an editor there and what a mess they made! The FBI came to that country town, hassled both these people to the point where the second one destroyed all they got, and the first one lost his insurance agency. He had to move. We've never had a chance to talk except by phone. He would like to spend a couple of days talking and it would be good for me, as a change and as a means of cleaning that one up or seeing that it has to go forward somehow. I think Vegas is not that far from you if there is anyone I should meet. Besides you. If this is scheduled it would pay most of the fare.

In a week I got to a black college for the first time. Maybe I'll outline that speech on the King assassination with the gadget on the bus. I do have new King stuff and it is hotter than Frame-Up. However, now that I'm having to look at the book for the first time since writing it I'm quite gratified. At what I've had to check.

I've got a job as a consultant for Playboy on some well-written crap. It is taking an enormous amount of time, so much that if I had an income I'd say I've more than earned the fee already and most of the work awaits. They'll be hardheaded but I'd doing a good job for them. It is blowing the research dept minds but they control nothing. The last18 pages took 20 hours to read, correct and annotate and four hours more on the phone. So, if the remaining 54 pages come in Tuesday's mail I'll work them on the bus and with the machine. I've already made arrangements, if it is possible, to then play the machine into the phone and for the researchers to tape on their end.

Despite all the new tensions and worries I'm also pleased at how fast and how much I can still work. I finished with them suppertime last night, and I got 7 hours sleep and took two walks today. Nonetheless, from last night suppertime until between 3 & 4 today I did an 8-10,000 word chapter...I'm merely raising the question about going on to LA if the speech is set so you can think about it. I know I'll be anxious to get back if there is a deal. The book can be hot and I'm in court on three cases, productively.

Again thanks and best regards,